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ABSTRACT

This document provides a synthesis of the history, context, and types of educational partnerships. Examples of partnerships from simple to complex and from policy and systemic educational improvement to classroom partners are given to illustrate the different types and impacts of partnerships. The following major elements of successful partnerships are also reviewed: top-level leadership; grounding in community needs; effective public relations; clear roles and responsibilities; racial-ethnic involvement; strategic planning; effective management and staffing structure; shared decision making and interagency ownership; shared credit and recognition; appropriate, well-timed resources; technical assistance; formal agreements; action and frequent success; patience, vigilance, and increased involvement; and local ownership. Finally, the evaluation of partnerships and various outcome measures are also discussed. A list of contact sources is included. (Author/LMI)

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ED 362 994

Synthesis of Existing Knowledge and Practice in the Field of Educational Partnerships

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)

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Synthesis of Existing Knowledge and Practice in the Field of Educational Partnerships

Educational Partnerships Program
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Preface

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) funded the first cycle of 4-year projects under its new Educational Partnerships Program in September 1990. The Educational Partnerships Program is authorized by the Educational Partnerships Act of 1988, Title VI, Subtitle A, Chapter 5 of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-418; 20 USC 5031-5039). This legislation also requires the U.S. Secretary of Education to conduct an annual evaluation of the grants made under the program and to disseminate information relating to the activities assisted.

In performing the evaluation and dissemination responsibility, OERI has attempted to design its activities to build on what already is known and to expand knowledge about the characteristics of effective partnerships and how to establish, sustain, and evaluate them. In order to establish a baseline for future work, assess what already is known about educational partnerships, and review potential evaluation design options, OERI commissioned the following analyses and syntheses:

> Danzberger, Jacqueline P., "Educational Partnerships Program: Analysis of Project Characteristics," December 1990.
>
> Education Resources Group, Inc., "An Overview of Evaluation Research on Selected Educational Partnerships Program," January 1991.
>
> Education Resources Group, Inc., "Options for Evaluating the Educational Partnerships Program," January 1991.
>
> Grobe, Terry, Susan P. Curnan, and Alan Melchior, "Synthesis of Existing Knowledge and Practice in the Field of Educational Partnerships," December 1990.

This is one of the four commissioned reports. All four are available through ERIC. While this synthesis was written in late 1990, the overall findings remain highly relevant.

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Executive Summary

This synthesis discusses the history, context, and types of educational partnerships. Examples of partnerships from simple to complex and from policy and systemic educational improvement to classroom partners are given to illustrate the different types and impacts of partnerships.

The following major elements of successful partnerships are also reviewed: top level leadership; grounding in community needs; effective public relations; clear roles and responsibilities; racial-ethnic involvement; strategic planning; effective management and staffing structure; shared decisionmaking and interagency ownership; shared credit and recognition; appropriate, well-timed resources; technical assistance; formal agreements; action and frequent success; patience, vigilance, and increased involvement; and local ownership. Lastly, evaluating partnerships and various outcome measures are also discussed.

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Introduction

Partnership has become the watchword of the nineties. In fact, where once this concept was mostly the province of the education and business communities, partnering is increasingly being used as a tool to stimulate and promote reforms within and between service delivery systems. The term "partnership" is widespread, invoked to describe any number of relationships and activities. At the same time, an incredible array of public and private funders are supporting partnership activities in communities across the country. It will help to inform the work of both funders and practitioners if we can step back from all the activity to look at the history and context of partnership building, examine successful prototypes or models of education partnerships, and consider where the business of partnership is headed in terms of development. These themes should suggest both a focus for current work in the field and a vision of how partnerships can be used as a tool for social change.

History and Context of Education Partnerships

Business/education partnerships perhaps have the most fully documented history; a plethora of articles, reports, books, and project descriptions attest to considerable activity, especially in the last 10 years. In addition, this country's rich history of volunteerism has greatly contributed to the success of school/community partnerships. Long-term partnerships also exist between public schools and the higher education community, relationships forged from mutual concerns of teaching and learning. A particularly successful partnership, rarely considered as such by researchers, is the internship component of teacher preparation programs. Colleges and universities have collaborated with public schools for many years to place student teachers in elementary, middle and high school classrooms under the guidance of experienced public school teachers.

In many urban areas, the social pressures of the late sixties and early seventies led to greater involvement of university communities in the concerns of public schools. More formal pairings began to develop as colleges and universities lent their energies to the tasks of developing multicultural curricula, training teachers to better respond to diversity, and, in general, working on quality education issues for an increasingly disadvantaged school population.

Business and education have been linked since the late 1800s, as rapid industrial changes necessitated the creation of education programs and institutions that could respond to the changing needs of the work force. However, in the late 1970s, when the term "partnership" became a popular expression and notion, the first partnership efforts were motivated largely by public relations concerns and the desire for corporations located in or near urban communities to be good neighbors. Many of these initial endeavors focused on giving financial donations or equipment to area schools or purchasing rewards (sweatshirts, gift certificates) for students as incentives for improved school attendance or course grades. Businesses did not always initiate these relationships. For example, Ruth Love pioneered the Adopt-A-School Program in 1981 when she headed the Oakland, California, school system.[1] The premise of this program was to encourage businesses to "adopt" a school or schools to help provide additional resources. The program, after achieving success in many urban communities, gained nationwide prominence and won the support of major businesses, such as the Sara Lee Corporation.

However, a crisis within public education was beginning to build increasing concern. In 1983, the U.S. Department of Education's National Commission on Excellence in Education issued *A Nation At Risk*, a report which strongly articulated the need for reforms in public education and which called for the establishment of higher standards for graduates and teachers entering the profession. A wave of publications under the aegis of various commissions and national foundations followed.

At the same time, businesses grew alarmed about the lack of preparation of its work force as the change from a manufacturing base to a service-driven economy escalated. Employers were experiencing burgeoning training costs because entry-level employees were unable to meet the demands of new and more complex job requirements, requirements calling for higher order thinking and problem-solving skills. It became apparent that a growing gap was developing between our nation's educational achievement and that of other industrialized countries. Added to these issues, the country's demographics were changing. Experts predicted that by 1995, the number of 16- to 24-year-olds would decline 20 percent from 1980 levels.[2] Of that pool, the number of minorities and poor and disadvantaged would significantly increase. It was clear that in order to ensure the continuing economic health of the nation, business would need to recapture the sense of vested interest in improving the preparation of its future work force.

These twin concerns, a crisis in public education and the increased demands of a service-driven economy, generated a flurry of activity. Between 1983-84 and 1987-88, the number of business/education partnerships rose from 42,200 to 140,800. More than 9 million students—24 percent of public school students—were directly involved in education partnerships. Overall, 70 percent of schools were in partnerships with businesses during 1987 and 1988.[3] Activities varied enormously, from small-scale projects that provided a school-to-work transition for selected high school students to citywide partnerships that developed long-term goals for school improvement in exchange for business' pledge of employment opportunities for graduates.[4]

As the scope of business/education partnership initiatives took on greater depth and breadth, the number of partners multiplied and the agenda for change became more ambitious. Multiple partnership projects began to include the human service sector, community-based agencies (often having their own rich history of partnership efforts within the community), labor unions, health organizations and hospitals, and city and county governments. Agendas began to reflect broad themes of interest to all parties, such as the social and economic health of the community, or the self-sufficiency of the citizenry. These efforts—communitywide change initiatives—have begun to develop over the last 5 years. It is perhaps too early to determine either their efficacy or their impact.

The Boston Experience: A Case Study

One of the oldest and best known partnerships is the Boston Compact; its development illustrates the history of partnerships very well. In 1973, court-ordered desegregation provided the impetus for developing partnerships with colleges and universities. As part of his court orders, Judge W. Arthur Garrity, Jr., asked area colleges and universities to pair with the Boston schools to help end "the ravages of discrimination."[5] In March of 1975, 21 area institutions volunteered to lend their expertise to the desegregation effort, agreeing to work in partnership with the schools to develop quality education for all 76,000 children in the system.[6] The early years of this precedent-setting agreement were devoted to building

cooperative relationships and to developing small projects that focused on curriculum development, staff training, or tutoring.

In the meantime, the Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education, a business leaders' group, initiated an Adopt-A-School program with several major companies and Boston high schools. An outgrowth of this first activity was a jobs collaborative program, which placed job developers hired by the Private Industry Council in the high schools in order to place students in summer jobs. By 1982, business was ready and willing to take on a broader agenda, one including school reform, work force preparation, and job opportunities. To this end, the first compact agreement was drafted and endorsed, an agreement that pledged greater access to entry-level jobs in return for school system improvements in the preparation of its graduates.

In addition, 15 years of school/college collaboration set the stage for more systemic involvement by this sector. The postsecondary education community signed a parallel agreement in 1982 that provided increased access to higher education for Boston public school graduates. Then, in 1984, the Higher Education Information Center was opened at the Boston Public Library to provide free postsecondary information and counseling services to counselors, students, and parents of all income levels. In 1985, a "last dollar" scholarship program called ACCESS was established to help students for whom college funding stood as a formidable barrier to higher education. The following year, a new corporate-funded foundation—The Boston Plan for Excellence—created a permanent endowment for public schools, addressing issues ranging from early childhood education to after-school sports programs.[7] Various business/university/community-based agency initiatives continue to build and expand upon this long history of partnership success.

However, as Eleanor Farrar's studies point out, the school improvement focus of the Boston Compact has waxed and waned. The turnover in school and program staff leadership, along with the lack of incentives and central office support for building-based improvements, has seriously hampered the ability of the school system to deliver on commitments, particularly the goal of lowering the dropout rate.[8] Recently, a renegotiated set of compact goals was approved calling for the decentralization of school governance and a more serious effort at reducing dropouts.

Discussion

The above discussion and case study suggests several important points about partnership development. First, partnerships often embrace diverse territory and goals. In Boston, for example, the vision expanded from Adopt-A-School approaches offering enriched opportunities for youth to embrace broader goals of systemwide reform. Second, partnership—like change—is a process, not an event. A partnership is a relationship between institutions (and people within those institutions). As in all human relationships, goals change over time, beginning with needs for affiliation, moving to the establishment of mutual

responsibilities (and enjoyment of mutual benefits), to increased commitment, if each stage is successfully negotiated. Thus, both the definition of partnership and the expectations must be appropriate to the particular stage of development. Also, the form of a partnership will generally change and evolve. Partnerships often start modestly, with one or two partners providing specific services, and grow through the years to include increasing numbers of partners working on larger and larger concerns.

Finally, partnerships are creatures of their context and environment. Both their focus and range shift to reflect changing ideas about how to address urban ills and education reform. Initially, partnerships in urban areas concentrated on assistance activities designed to benefit a small group of teachers or students, then expanded to provide resources to needy urban schools; evolved over time to focus on school-to-work transition programs; and most recently, have begun to work on developing comprehensive service systems and full-scale education reform. With these shifts come the need to involve different and more varied sets of players and to develop new ways to shape and define the goals.

Partnerships: Definition and Typology

What distinguishes a partnership from other kinds of cooperative relationships? One definition suggests the following:

> ...successful partnerships are characterized by an exchange of ideas, knowledge and resources. Partners form a mutually rewarding relationship with the purpose of improving some aspect of education. The relationship must be based on the identification and acceptance of compatible goals and strategies. In addition, the partners should respect the differences in each other's culture and style, striving to apply the best of both worlds to achieve established goals.[9]

Roberta Trachtman at Fordham University differentiates partnerships from other types of institutional relationships by asking the question, "Who benefits?" If the answer is not "all parties," then the arrangement is not a true partnership.[10] What are the benefits for various partners? Benefits vary according to the community, of course, but, in general, partners benefit in the following ways:

> **Business gains:** improved public relations, better prepared entry-level employees, decreased training costs, increased productivity, heightened potential for local economic development;
>
> **Education gains:** increased public confidence and support for education, increased access to new technology, enhanced opportunities for professional growth and development, increased resources (dollars and people), increased staff morale and student success (resulting in fewer problems, that is, violence, truancy, suspensions);
>
> **Higher education gains:** increased college admission and retention, better prepared students, decreased remediation costs;
>
> **Parents and students gain:** increased voice in education affairs, empowerment, increased and more effective services, enhanced higher education and career opportunities; and
>
> **Community gains:** improved quality of life, a strong education system that can attract newcomers to the city.

This said, how are institutional relationships established, and how do they grow through stages to become successful partnerships? How do small partnerships grow, as in the example of the school/college collaboration in Boston, from program-specific activities to systemwide, or even communitywide, change collaboratives?

Typologies provide useful conceptual frameworks by which to answer these questions. There are many existing partnership typologies, and no single model is entirely adequate to explain the complexities of the process. Partnership activities are extremely varied and so resist simple categorization. There also are various ways of looking at partnerships. One could look at the focus of the partnership: Is it program specific? schoolwide? school system or communitywide? One could look at target population: Does the activity benefit students, school staff, parents, disadvantaged youth and adults, the entire community? One might examine how the partnership was created: Was it generated locally? initiated because of a federally or state-sponsored initiative? because of a grant from a private foundation? Or, one could consider the locus of leadership: Is the partnership generated from the top down? the bottom up? Obviously, there are many paths to traverse that will help shape and define an understanding of these unique institutional relationships.

Three typologies seem particularly useful, however, and will be described below. The third typology (levels of impact) will serve as the basis for the heart of the discussion and as the framework for presenting specific examples. This typology was selected because it emphasizes the partnership's impact on the education system and because it most easily lends itself to the issue of how to evaluate community partnerships.

Typology #1: Levels of Involvement

The first typology describes the stages of partnership development by focusing on levels of involvement. Three stages are delineated: support, cooperation, and collaboration. Each stage is characterized by how it varies on the following seven dimensions:

- Amount and type of resources,
- Type of activities,
- Participation in planning and decisionmaking,
- Effectiveness of communication,
- Commitment of leadership from top management,
- Equality of partners, and
- Participation of staff.

In the *support* stage, typically a beginning phase, some member of the school community (a teacher, principal, or superintendent) engages a partner, often a local business, to provide resources (volunteers for classroom activities such as read-aloud programs; money for school libraries, computers, or special student projects). These first relationships usually focus on acquiring new resources for very focused activities. Typically, there is limited attention to the other dimensions that characterize more sophisticated relationships. However, these are first steps which begin to build interest and support and which lay important groundwork for greater involvement.

The *cooperation* stage is characterized by a greater degree of communication, participation, and leadership, although the relationship is unequal, with the school on the receiving end in terms of accruing benefits. Typical examples are the development of mentorship projects or school-to-work transition programs. A planning structure usually evolves to support the greater levels of participation and shared decisionmaking (either a joint planning team or a project director cofunded by the partners).

In the *collaboration* stage, the partnership begins to assume "a life of its own." In this stage, the partnership looks like a full-scale orchestra performance led by various conductors. The partnership team has the full attention and involvement of top-level leadership and has implementation support from a full-time staff. Partners have established long-range goals that address essential school or community needs. Major resources from various partners are committed, and many activities are happening at once. There is widespread staff involvement within all partner institutions, and all benefit within a relationship where parties enjoy a relationship among "equals." [11]

Typology #2: Partnership Structure

A second typology concentrates on the organization or structure of the partnership. Three types are delineated: simple, moderately complex, and complex. In a *simple* partnership, one partner manages the initiative and the others provide supportive services or resources. The school system is the recipient of services or provides access to students. Adopt-A-School programs are typical examples of this type of arrangement.

The *moderately complex* partnership involves any of three arrangements: shared management or decisionmaking among two or more partners; multiple partners, each with substantive program responsibility; or more than one partner within each sector (e.g., two or more community colleges, each involved with providing college awareness workshops for urban students and parents). Another example of this type of structure is a summer jobs partnership in which school personnel identify students and teach courses, the employment and training office provides work readiness skills and job placement or supervision, and a community-based agency offers case management or counseling services. In the moderately complex partnership, the school system is not a recipient of services but an active partner in the enterprise.

A *complex* partnership has the characteristics of a moderately complex partnership plus one or more of the following characteristics: two or more levels of partnership in the project; a new organization formed for purposes of the project; or multiple partners from two or more sectors. An example of a complex partnership is a city which establishes a broad-based youth commission to address major issues, coordinates funding and existing programs, and addresses service gaps or programmatic improvements. An important point in considering the value of this typology is that the terms refer only to the structure of the partnership and do not correspond to the level of complexity of the project's goals or objectives.[12]

Typology #3: Levels of Impact

The preceding models focus either on the character of the relationship between or among partners or on the structure of the partnership itself. A third typology, one particularly useful when considering outcomes and, therefore, ways of evaluating partnership activity, focuses on levels of impact upon the education system. Six levels are outlined:

- Level 6: Partners in special services
- Level 5: Partners in the classroom
- Level 4: Partners in teacher training and development
- Level 3: Partners in management
- Level 2: Partners in systemic educational improvement
- Level 1: Partners in policy

Again, within this classification system, some partnerships start small, providing services to select student groups or individual classrooms, and, over time, expand to address increasingly difficult issues and concerns. Some partnerships remain small but effective; some are initiated at the outset to effect systemwide change. Multidimensional partnerships can be found at any level; however, in general, "the higher the level of involvement and investment in education, the greater the opportunity to bring about lasting improvements in education, and the greater the likelihood of significantly improving the work force readiness of our nation's youth."[13]

Discussion

As stated earlier, the first two typologies illustrate critical elements regarding partnership development, elements that center on the relationship between partners and that describe the structure of these relations. The third model, however, focuses on goals. One of the dilemmas of evaluating partnerships comes from the widely shared belief that relationship-building is an end in itself. Certainly, successful relationships provide critical groundwork for collaborative efforts, but it is also clear that partnerships are established to achieve some end. The purpose of partnerships needs to be both clearly stated and clear-sightedly measured.

Partnership Examples

Literature abounds with examples of various kinds of partnerships in urban and rural areas across the country. Selected descriptions will be used to illustrate each of the levels delineated by typology #3 (levels of impact). Special attention will be given to levels 3 through 6 because they most closely describe the "state of the art" of partnerships established in the last 5 years. These levels also provide the most potential for education reform, economic development, and community revitalization.

Partners in Special Services

Special services partnerships provide "short-term, project-, or student-specific activities or resources to help with a specific problem or need."[14] IBM, for example, takes 4,000 young people to Yankee Stadium each year as a reward for improved school attendance. Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company helped a school rebuild its parent organization by matching each membership fee dollar for dollar.[15]

The value of this type of partnership is restricted by the time-limited nature of the service provision. It may be relatively easy to measure impact, however. Schools involved with IBM can easily see whether or not more students improve their attendance each year and if the particular incentive is effective. On the other hand, there is a tendency to ignore the results of short-term services. The major value of this type of partnership is that it is a good beginning for new partners. Because activities are generally simple and straightforward, and success quick and easy to measure, special services partnerships promote affiliation and build interest for partners in working together.

The Career Beginnings program is something of a hybrid model, although in a sense it illustrates a moderately complex, multidimensional, special services partnership, and so will be discussed here. Career Beginnings was created in 1986 to increase the number of high school juniors from low-income families who complete high school and enter college, technical training, or full-time employment. Since its initiation, Career Beginnings has operated in over 30 colleges in more than 25 cities, serving some 100 students per year.

The program, a partnership of local colleges, public schools, and businesses, works with "tenacious" students—those with average grades who are underachieving but are not highly at risk of dropping out. The program matches students with mentors from the local business community. Mentors are carefully trained and supported, and they help students with career planning, applying to college, and understanding the professional work environment. Students also benefit from related services such as year-round academic/career workshops designed to address needs developmentally, summer jobs on college campuses, and case management. Career Beginnings is typically managed by a full-time director located in a local college or university. Directors are supported through funds pooled for this purpose by school, college, and business partners.[16]

Three elements make Career Beginnings effective. The first element is its focus on goals. Many mentorship programs work to establish caring, extended family relationships between young people and their mentors. This is the primary aim of such programs; outcomes of the relationship are cited as secondary benefits. Career Beginnings established the relationship to foster college entry for young people.

The second unique feature of Career Beginnings is the synergy of its program components. All services are designed in concert to support students, to encourage academic success and

college entry, and to link education to the world of work. Career Beginnings Director Bill Bloomfield believes that mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth should not be developed as stand-alone programs but should be part of a comprehensive set of services.[17]

The third unique feature of Career Beginnings is its three-part partnership of schools, colleges, and businesses, each fulfilling a role to advance the mission of better preparing young people for careers and success in the work force. This partnership provides specific services for young people over a fixed time period, usually 19 months. It is a special example of a way in which involvement at this level can, in fact, generate significant impact.

The Ford Foundation sponsored a multiyear initiative—the Urban School-Community Dropout Prevention Collaborative—beginning in 1986. Twenty-one cities received grants to develop dropout prevention partnerships. Each city established a coalition of leaders from schools, businesses, local government, social agencies, and parent organizations who examined the causes of why students left school and devised ways to address the specific issues. Examples of community activities included establishing dropout databases, developing multiagency service delivery systems, increasing staff development in schools with high dropout rates, developing services for out-of-school teen parents, and creating early intervention or school-to-work programs. Again, this initiative is difficult to categorize. In one respect, it can be regarded as a partnership that brings special services to a vulnerable school population. On the other hand, participant cities worked on a wide range of interventions, from providing focused programmatic services to developing teacher training programs, changing schools, and reworking school policies.

Partners in the Classroom

Classroom partners are volunteers who "improve the learning environment by bringing their business or occupational expertise directly into the classroom for students and teachers, or bringing the classroom to the business."[18] An example of a rural, classroom-based collaboration was a pilot project called Partners In Education, a 3-year effort established in Vermont in 1986 involving IBM and high schools in four counties. The partnership's purpose was to strengthen the mathematics and science programs offered by Vermont high schools. Participating school districts were selected by the Vermont Department of Education based on interest and ability to make several commitments, among them creating planning time for teachers and business partners to meet. IBM employees were chosen according to interest and technical expertise.

Teachers requesting assistance were matched with IBM employees based on particular classroom needs. Business partners worked in classrooms for at least 1 semester, helping with classes in mathematics, science, or computer usage for up to 1 day a week (usually team teaching with classroom instructors). The Vermont Department of Education selected the schools, and IBM offered its employees 1 day a week away from work with pay and travel expenses.

A major challenge for the partnership was putting in place a timely matching process, something that proved time consuming, cumbersome, and difficult. What helped make this process work was having a coordinator or "broker" of the process, a role assumed by the Vermont Department of Education. Extensive communication and follow-up were required to develop an effective process. The department considers education partnerships critical in resource scarce rural areas and says that both schools and businesses report benefits from sharing technical and human resources. The department used this successful pilot to interest other businesses in partnership projects, while IBM went on to create a school/business elementary and middle school initiative.[19]

Another example of partners in the classroom is the High School Academies model, first started in Philadelphia by the Urban Coalition in the late 1960s and later disseminated nationally through leadership from the Academy for Educational Development. Academies, 3-year schools-within-schools, address the needs of disadvantaged youth by relating education more closely to the world of work. The academies are structured around specific career areas, hence, the Academy of Environmental Science and Health or the Academy of Science. Partners in these ventures are schools, the business community, and intermediary, community-based agencies. This model has been carefully evaluated, and Public/Private Ventures has called it "the best single model in the country for business involvement in the schools."

The academies are important because they demonstrate many components of what is now considered the "folk wisdom" of serving at-risk youth (i.e., clear criteria for selecting participants and student choice; high expectations for young people; connecting learning with real life; consistent support, individual attention, and motivational awards; and close supervision of youth in job placements).[20] In addition, the partnerships inherent within the academies model are very interactive. Business participates in decisionmaking and fundraising, but particularly in developing curricula, working in teams with educators and community members. Community-based agencies function as brokers and, in this capacity, work to obtain support for the academy, facilitate the work of business/education partners, serve as advocates for student interests, and coordinate the mentor and work components of the program.

A third example is the Indiana Partners in Education Program, which provided grants to cities that agreed to form partnerships and address one of several state-developed goals, including increasing student achievement, employability, and postsecondary entry. Participating cities were required to hire a local coordinator to manage emerging school/business partnerships. In addition, cities established management committees which included business and education representatives, including teachers. The group assessed community needs, formulated goals and objectives, designed the program, and monitored progress. The state provided oversight and technical assistance.

As a result of the initiative, Hammond, Indiana, formed a partnership between Inland Steel and the four Hammond high schools. Inland Steel offered afternoon work placement at Inland to a high school chemistry teacher. In return, the teacher used Inland's chemistry lab on

Saturdays to teach advanced chemistry to a group of students. This local partnership is worth noting because, although small and focused, it was a true partnership—both parties benefited from the arrangement. Business gained an employee, and the school system accessed technical resources. The partnership also gave gifted students an enriched learning experience.[21]

The benefits of this type of partnership lie in the ability to directly and positively impact a small group of young people. In fact, when goals are clearly developed, it is relatively easy to measure progress in terms of academic achievement, attendance, work readiness, and job placements. This classroom-based partnership model is also a good way to foster improved understanding and better relationships between teachers and business or community members. When planned carefully and implemented well, this model can facilitate the implementation of new teaching technologies and instructional approaches. This can be powerful because many partnerships do not directly involve teachers and, therefore, have limited impact on the quality or effectiveness of instruction.

The limitation of the approach is clear. Classroom-based programs benefit only a few students and teachers. In urban areas, these program-specific interventions are often criticized for being inequitable and for delivering too little, too late, and for too few. Most classroom-based interventions are billed as pilot programs which, if successful, can be replicated or institutionalized. Rarely, however, is either successfully accomplished. Funding constraints, lack of leadership, institutional resistance, and lack of incentives are only a few of the reasons why many successful programs fail to impact the larger school arena or the system.

Partners in Teacher Training and Development

Partners in teacher training and development provide "opportunities to update, upgrade or maintain skills (for example, to learn the latest developments in science or mathematics), or learn more about the labor market...workplace needs...career opportunities" or developments in allied fields.[22] An excellent teacher training partnership, one involving a private foundation and a school system, is the Jefferson County Public Schools/Gheens Professional Development Academy. Planning for this project began in 1983 and extended through 1986. A second phase of development was completed in the summer of 1990. The vision upon which the academy was developed was the premise that school improvement activities must be "linked implicitly to the professional development of those working in the school system." The academy was established to provide ongoing professional development to education professionals and to relate that training to "a continuing review of state-of-the-art knowledge about teaching, learning, and organizational effectiveness."

The academy itself is a former elementary school rehabilitated by the district into a modern, functional conference center. Renovation funds came from the school system as evidence of a long-term commitment to the venture. Leadership in planning came from, among others, the school superintendent, the executive director of the foundation, and leaders of the teacher's

association. The academy offers a full range of professional development activities, such as clinical supervision training, teacher support groups, grants assistance sessions, leadership training for high school chairpersons, and writing seminars. Although the academy is a fine example of a professional development partnership, much of the academy's work contains elements of systemic educational improvement. In its work with the schools, the academy draws upon several approaches—the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Middle Grades Assessment Program, Professional Development Schools—all of which have as a major thrust the goal of school restructuring.[23]

Academic internships for staff provide additional examples of this type of partnership. Begun in 1985, the Industry Initiatives for Science and Math Education is a partnership of San Francisco Bay Area Industries and the University of California-Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science designed to improve the quality of mathematics and science education in public and private schools. Selected teachers are offered summer opportunities in industry for pay; with assistance from industry mentors, teachers work with teams on specific, short-term projects. Teachers receive guidance from the university about ways to transfer lessons learned through the summer experience to their classrooms. Through 1989, the program expanded to 50 business sponsors offering 345 teacher fellowships.[24]

Business benefits from this program because summer is a down-time, and fellowships offer increased staff for specific projects. Teachers benefit because the program offers a chance to learn new skills, become familiar with new technologies, earn a summer salary in a new environment, update classroom instruction, relate curriculum to the world of work, and provide students with information about jobs and careers. One teacher who served as a summer fellow reported that the program had shown the need for higher order thinking skills in the workplace. As a result, she restructured her teaching approaches to focus more intensely on cooperative learning techniques such as project-oriented learning and working in teams to solve real-life problems.[25]

The benefit of this type of partnership lies in its ability to address deficiencies of the classroom-based model. Teacher training partnerships are not only able to impact the way instruction is delivered but engage large numbers of the teaching staff. Limitations of the approach lie in what Jane David calls the "jigsaw puzzle" nature of education.[26] Because of the interconnectedness of the system, a reform at any one level is often limited by problems that the change causes at a different level of the system. For example, teachers attempting to work as a team in a middle school often encounter problems with union rules, central office curriculum and testing requirements, or principal resistance.

Partners in Management

"Management assistance partnerships provide school officials with management support and business expertise in a broad range of areas, such as increased principal or teacher autonomy,

labor management relations, flexible personnel and incentive systems, purchasing efficiencies, plant and equipment issues, management information systems, and strategic planning."[27] In fact, businesses and private foundations are increasingly investing in partnerships with education to reorganize the management of public schools.

Management training is an area in which many businesses excel, and because of this expertise, it is an area in which the private sector can make significant contributions to education improvement. In addition, some large companies have participated in top-to-bottom reorganizations (born out of fiscal necessity) and thus can help with the task of restructuring public school systems. Again, because of different foci and goals, some partnerships are modest; others are extremely ambitious in scope and potential.

One particular example is typical and illustrates the above points well. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, business leaders associated with the Greater Milwaukee Education Trust, in cooperation with the public schools, initiated a management partners program with school principals. Principals interested in developing school-based management in their schools (two-thirds of the school staff must have approved the plan) pair with management partners from the business community. Partners work on various management and governance issues and problems. This partnership process applies the experiences of business executives to the management of public schools. Business partners have been able to bring in additional company resources to address specific concerns, for example, in technology, curriculum, and staff training.

An executive on loan to the Milwaukee Trust says that business partners experience more satisfaction and success when the principal requesting assistance evinces a strong desire to share power. In addition, he says that the change process is "evolutionary, not revolutionary." Although business can help encourage and foster participatory processes and good strategic planning, unless major decisions, such as budgeting and personnel, devolve to the school level, not much will be different. If these decisions get handed to the schools, a more systematic training approach will need to be developed and implemented beforehand.[28]

The partners-in-management approach enables a school system to avail itself of the business community's significant technical expertise and to work in partnership to develop more efficient and competent management and finance systems. This can go a long way toward helping restore community confidence in public education. However, while educators can learn much about more efficient systems, they are not always able to implement them because of government or union restraints. Even if new systems can be implemented, efficient systems are not necessarily effective systems. If management reforms do not change what happens in school buildings, particularly in classrooms, the problems that plague education systems will not diminish. Even the decentralization of school governance, while touted as a promising reform, will not necessarily create positive change unless principals and teachers feel ownership, have a significant role, receive technical assistance and training, have access to resources for professional development, and address clearly stated goals that have the full support of the community.

Partners in Systemic Educational Improvement

Systemic partnerships are change initiatives in which "businesses, education officials, and other community leaders identify the need for reform or improvement in the educational system, and then work over the long term to make those changes happen."[29] Some of the most creative and potentially impactful partnerships emerging in recent years are multidimensional partnerships that focus on systemic education improvement. Instead of emphasizing the classroom or a special population, these initiatives aim at a more substantial restructuring of the education system. Restructuring in this context means "to preserve and build upon what has been successful in educating...children and... rethink and redesign...aspects that have failed. This ultimately requires taking a critical look at all aspects of schooling, including mission and goals...organization and management...curriculum... instruction...roles and responsibilities of educational personnel...roles, responsibilities, and involvement of parents and the community, school finance and educational regulation and control."[30]

These new partnerships generally evolve as a result of several years of work on more program-specific partnership activities. It makes sense that when partners build a trusting, cooperative working relationship and then begin to provide remedial, enriched, or special services to a youth population that eventually it becomes obvious that there are glitches in the system which make providing services difficult. These glitches may indeed be so serious that they serve as barriers to success, particularly for disadvantaged youth. Given this recognition, partners often will seek to address issues within the system itself.

Several examples illustrate the power of this type of partnership. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation sponsors an urban initiative designed to "develop and provide an education of high expectations, high content, and high support to disadvantaged youth in the middle grades in urban school systems." Five school systems—Baltimore, Louisville, Milwaukee, Oakland, and San Diego—received grants. Each system has launched a comprehensive project in two or three pilot schools designed to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged youth. School/community teams in the pilot schools base activities on four program objectives specified by the foundation.

The foundation encourages school/business/community-based agency partnerships in the grantee cities. In addition, the foundation considers itself in partnership with the communities to advance the agenda. To this end, it provides on-site technical assistance and grants to community-based organizations for local training and capacity building, as well as grants to national foundations for training, networking, disseminating, and directing national attention to middle grades reform. After 1 year of implementation, the foundation reports that the initiative has led teachers to try different approaches in educating disadvantaged students and has encouraged business and parent involvement in the schools. This modest start again proves that educational change takes time; even with impressive resources, change is still an evolving process.

Two grantee cities, Baltimore and Louisville, portray specific partnership activity. Baltimore has focused on providing disadvantaged youth with a more challenging education through a collaboration with Johns Hopkins University. School and university staff are working cooperatively to improve the quality and delivery of reading instruction and will continue work over the next 3 years in different subject areas.

In Louisville, project schools that had little parent involvement have experienced as much as a 150-percent increase in Parent Teacher Association membership. This is the result of an effective outreach strategy by school staff, who have been assisted in this venture by working in partnership with the University of Louisville's School of Education. A university staffperson with significant expertise in parent involvement works with the coordinator or principal of the pilot schools to provide training and on-site support.[31]

The Clark Foundation mentions several issues that serve as barriers to change in the grantee cities, among them: lack of school system leadership; lack of stable project oversight; continued emphasis on discrete projects rather than systemwide change; and the related difficulty of replicating pilot school successes to other schools in the system.[32]

Another example of partners in systemic educational improvement, one featuring business interest in school restructuring, is the Coalition of Essential Schools effort. The Exxon Education Foundation, Southwestern Bell, General Foods, and Citibank, among others, supports a group of 500 elementary and secondary schools across the country that are making fundamental changes in the way schools are structured and instruction is delivered. These schools, under the leadership of Theodore Sizer, professor of education at Brown University, are working to establish group instruction with teachers as coaches, small class sizes, a simplified curriculum stressing critical thinking skills, and active involvement of the student in the learning process.[33]

The National Alliance of Business also is expanding and supporting a Partnership Network of cities and states working on education reform and school restructuring. The purpose of the network is to shorten the process of educational change by sharing what works and by actively disseminating knowledge of new developments in the field of education.[34]

Obviously, the benefit of this approach is its impact on the education system as a whole, its potential for significant change. The drawback, however, is the time and labor connected with the task. Changing an entrenched, politicized system takes time. However, it is important for more complex types of partnerships to communicate a "sense of urgency" for their change agenda. A community should reasonably expect to see progress on school restructuring in 5 to 10 years. Timelines need to be realistic, neither too short nor too long.[35]

Partners in Policy

"Policy partnerships are collaborative efforts at the national, state, or local level among businesses, schools, and public officials that shape the public and political debate, bring about substantive changes in state or federal legislation or local school governance, and affect the overall direction of the educational system."[36] Most cities (or states) have several levels of partnership in operation before undertaking a policy change agenda, although this is not always the case. Typically, however, communities have experienced some success with programmatic or classroom partnerships, which have led to concerns about changes in the larger education system, including the issue of connecting schools and community resources. This work generally leads to the recognition that there is a lack of connection between various service sectors and that there are significant organizational barriers to effective collaboration. At this point, collaborators may begin to develop policy partnerships and communitywide initiatives.

Two historical examples (Boston Compact and Portland Investment) are worth mentioning in this context, particularly since the initiatives are recognized as the forerunners of policy partnerships. The Boston Compact, as mentioned earlier, had a successful school-to-work partnership in place in several high schools before creating an historic agreement between the school system and the business community. In a more recent policy development, a broadly representative Compact Steering Committee negotiated a second set of 5-year goals, which were endorsed by the community in 1989. As part of the negotiations, a groundbreaking agreement with the Boston Teacher's Union provided the opportunity to include as a goal the decentralization of management to the school building level.

The Portland Investment grew out of a working partnership between the public schools, the city, the Chamber of Commerce, the Private Industry Council, and various community organizations. In 1984, when the leaders of these organizations became convinced that a larger effort was needed to improve long-term job opportunities for disadvantaged youth, a Leaders Roundtable was convened. From this forum began some unique work designed to coordinate employment services and to create school-to-work transitions for youth. In 1986, an interagency implementation team was created to represent the school district, city, and business communities. New goals were established that called for the creation of a comprehensive service system for youth (prenatal through age 21) with a continuum of education, employment, and support services.[37]

Commonwealth Futures was a Massachusetts state-level initiative established in 1986 and operated out of the Governor's Office of Educational Affairs. Futures featured collaboration at both the state and local levels designed to better address the needs of at-risk youth. The mission of this initiative was to reduce school dropout rates and increase the rates of program reentry for youth who had already dropped out. At the state level, a steering committee of cabinet-level secretaries and an interagency work group provided oversight and addressed barriers to local implementation. This involved designing more coordinated state funding

processes, providing technical assistance, and changing or adjusting funding regulations where feasible.

At the local level, Futures worked with 13 communities that had high concentrations of at-risk youth. Each city formed a partnership structure. An executive board composed of the mayor, superintendent, Private Industry Council chair, and lead human services representative provided oversight, made resources available, and addressed policy concerns. Broad-based planning teams, working in concert with city leaders and staff, developed and implemented communitywide service plans to address dropout/reentry/postsecondary placement issues. All city plans addressed three broad goal areas:

- Building a continuous, linked service system for youth;
- Creating school change (restructuring schools to provide better instruction and support for at-risk youth and changing school policies related to such issues as attendance, suspension, promotion, and graduation, which served to push out marginal students); and
- Developing community partnerships to provide avenues to postsecondary opportunities and to enhance support.[38]

During the life of Commonwealth Futures, the Massachusetts State Department of Education reported decreases in the dropout rate in 7 of the 13 communities.

San Diego provides an interesting example of the initiation stages of a locally generated school/human service/city and county government partnership. After various news articles highlighted problems in one elementary school and its surrounding neighborhood, the leadership of the above-mentioned sectors met to see how they could address the issues. From an initial commitment to work together, the leaders commissioned a study which explored the feasibility of developing an integrated services model for children and families in the area. Parents and school and human service providers were surveyed.

Survey findings included the following: parents cited the elementary school as the place they would go to for help with various concerns; major needs of children and families were identified; and service barriers were articulated. As a result, a one-stop, coordinated family services center was proposed that would operate on or near the school site and serve as a laboratory for work on service integration strategies. Policy issues that have been addressed include multiple eligibility criteria, client assessment, service delivery, confidentiality, service gaps, and health insurance. The citywide leadership group obtained initial support from several national foundations to support the family services center, which opened in March of 1991.[39]

A Mayor's 1986 Education Summit provided the initial impetus for systemwide change in the Chicago public schools. Evolving out of the summit was the Alliance for Better Chicago Schools, a coalition of 40 civic organizations. This coalition, led by a business leader, lobbied for statewide legislation that would make changes in the school system. The legislation effectively decentralized management of the public schools, putting more power and authority into the hands of school-based governance boards composed of principals, teachers, and parents, and establishing accountability measures for school staff.

Several important elements of this reorganization include the strong three-part partnership forged among city government, business, and powerful community-based agencies; the ongoing training for school councils provided by foundations and the business community; and the creation of business-funded community organizers who have worked with community-based organizations to develop council involvement within various neighborhoods. The initiative has experienced the usual problems with decentralized management efforts, mainly tension between traditional top-down management and the newer decentralized endeavors; problems created by the diverse skills and experiences of council members combined with their new and significant responsibilities; and a set-back precipitated by the Illinois Supreme Court, which recently challenged the constitutionality of the school councils' election process.[40]

South Carolina provides an excellent example of a statewide, policy-level partnership between the public schools and the business community. Collaboration among the business, education, and political communities—largely fueled by the desire for economic development and the poor quality of the public schools—resulted in the passage of a comprehensive piece of legislation, the Education Improvement Act of 1984. Lobbying efforts by the business community were widely viewed as essential to gaining the financial underpinnings for the legislation, which was obtained by adding a penny to the state sales tax. In return for their support, business pushed for, and gained, a formal accountability system as part of the act. As a result of the legislation, school improvement councils were created, and schools were mandated to plan improvements and create partnerships to strengthen the involvement of parents, business, and other community members. Results thusfar include test score increases at all grade levels; continuation rate increases to postsecondary institutions; and increases in remedial, support, and enrichment programs. Elements that have contributed to the success of this initiative include leadership by both the public and private sectors, a widespread acknowledgment of the problem, a statewide political and educational campaign to gain support for reform, a data-based system of accountability, and ongoing mechanisms for sustaining the effort.[41]

Two other initiatives that began with a policy-level thrust are the Annie E. Casey Foundation's New Futures project and the Rockefeller Foundation's Persistent Poverty Program. The New Futures project involves six cities and focuses on a communitywide strategy to reduce school dropouts, youth unemployment/inactivity, and teen pregnancy. The vision of New Futures is impressive, since it calls for institutional change not only in schools but in all youth-serving organizations and institutions. A major structural element of the

initiative is the creation of citywide "oversight collaboratives." In each city, these leadership groups oversee planning and implementation and are responsible for making policy changes that make various service delivery systems more responsive to the needs of youth.

The Rockefeller Foundation's Persistent Poverty Program, a six-city initiative, is designed to give cities maximum discretion in formulating strategies to combat persistent poverty in targeted neighborhoods. Unique features of the program include the use of community-specific data to drive and motivate partners and the concentration on community organizing and community awareness as major tools in the work.[42]

The benefits of policy-level partnerships lie in the ability to involve large numbers of stakeholders, address significant issues, create change within and between various systems, and shape state and federal policy in ways that benefit young people. The model, however, has disadvantages. Often communitywide initiatives have such diffuse, abstract, or unrealistic missions that it becomes almost impossible to measure progress or recognize success. The structure of such initiatives is often unwieldy, making process more important than product, planning more important than implementation. These initiatives sometimes lose sight of the clients; systems change is sought for its own sake rather than for the benefit of young people.

Discussion

At the conclusion of this brief typological review, two points are worth restating. First, many of the partnerships described embrace several categories. The Portland Investment, for example, contains classroom and special service partnerships. But at the same time, it is clear that this initiative has impact which extends beyond more circumscribed approaches. Second, partnerships which attempt higher level strategies face a more challenging task, but they offer a more substantial and lasting impact on the community.

Generic Elements of Education Partnerships

Given the almost inexhaustible store of partnership examples and the range of possible impacts on a system or across systems, one could reasonably ask if there is an overall set of elements that make education partnerships effective. Although numerous characteristics were highlighted in the discussion of partnership examples and cited as reasons for their success, a listing of the major generic elements should serve as a helpful roadmap. The following guide, like the typologies, may not include every possible component but is intended to be as complete as possible.

Components of Successful Partnerships

Top-level Leadership

Most partnerships, particularly those which are stable and have impact, receive sustained attention from leaders. Who the top leaders are depends on the type and location of the partnership. Program-specific collaboratives or whole-school approaches need the "buy-in" and cooperation of the principal, although central office staff will also need to be informed and/or involved. A systemwide dropout prevention effort will need the blessing of the superintendent and the involvement of other community leaders. A work force preparation initiative will need, among others, business, school, higher education, and community-based agency leadership.

Partnerships generally begin because a school or community leader with an idea or a vision starts the process. This individual, sometimes called a "broker," convenes a series of meetings with various players which result in commitments to "do something" about the issue.[43] Over time, this individual generally allows authority and ownership to shift, either to a broad-based group or project staff, or both. This initial broker, a neutral convener knowledgeable about several organizational worlds and able to help partners bridge differences and set common goals, is an important player; yet few partnerships survive and grow if leadership does not expand beyond a single individual.

School leadership is critical for partnerships that have educational change as their mission. Leadership means talking up the initiative, getting others interested and involved, providing necessary resources (in-kind, financial, and staff resources), and holding staff accountable for results. Many partnerships have floundered because the superintendent either blocked the process or remained too passive and disinterested to defuse resistance within the system.

Finally, if there are major political battles occurring in the city, it is not feasible to undertake a significant community partnership. It is important to pay attention to the saying that "it is easier to stay out than to get out." Many partnerships begun in haste flounder because of the

buffeting of political winds and make subsequent efforts more difficult to sell to the community.

Grounding in Community Needs

Good ideas have a power all their own, but to build ownership among partners, the initiative must address widely shared needs. Needs assessment is an effective vehicle for building consensus and shared ownership, though this important and time-consuming process often is circumvented in the rush to get partners on board (particularly the business community) or to initiate action.

Data is a powerful tool for generating community concern. Numbers documenting high dropout or grade retention rates generally get attention and provide proof that partners are addressing a real problem. On the other hand, a city that begins a compact-type project in the midst of a recession when adult workers are losing jobs is likely to fail.

Effective Public Relations

Partnerships need to build and maintain support for their efforts, often from a wide array of community stakeholders. At the same time, partners need to be kept abreast of the activities and accomplishments of the partnership. In addition, ambitious agendas, such as school restructuring, need sustained public attention. For all these reasons, successful and long-lasting partnerships pay attention to the politics of public relations.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities

Once partners have decided to work together on a particular issue of concern to the community, they need to clearly articulate and agree upon the role and responsibilities of each collaborator. This is an essential first step as it is integral to the concept. Partnerships are, after all, developing reciprocal roles and sharing resources in order to accomplish a goal that cannot be addressed successfully by any one party.

Racial-Ethnic Involvement

An obvious point is that, in most urban areas, large numbers of disadvantaged or vulnerable young people are poor and racially or culturally diverse. However, many partnerships are neither led by nor staffed by diverse members. These partnerships often do not involve parents, students, or other community actors in significant ways. Doing this may be very challenging, but it is worth keeping the issue ever present on the agenda. A partnership that does not involve the community will have limited long-lasting impact.

Strategic Planning

Partnerships should follow strategic planning principles. Specifically, it is important to agree upon and put in writing a formal mission statement; to set goals and measurable outcomes; and to develop an implementation plan that includes activities to meet goals, persons responsible, timelines, and a monitoring and evaluation process. Cities do not need to reinvent the wheel regarding planning strategies, and care should be taken to base activities and interventions on research and best practice. This takes time; planning should not be too abbreviated a process, and it should be ongoing. Some group, typically a leaders group, should assume responsibility for monitoring progress and helping remove implementation barriers.

Effective Management and Staffing Structure

Partnerships usually start, as mentioned above, with a leaders group, planning team, or "grassroots" coalition. However, most partnerships do not run smoothly without at least a full-time manager. Leaders groups or planning teams serve as good idea generators, oversight providers, policy developers, or strategic planners. However, these groups are composed of people who have full-time jobs in addition to their partnership responsibilities. Implementation does not happen by magic, and someone needs to be there to "run the store." Managers and staff need to be optimistic, energetic "doers," with specific skills in negotiation, organization, communication, and problemsolving. In addition, managers need to be familiar with several systems to communicate effectively across several organizations and institutions and to help overcome turf and territory barriers.

As a partnership becomes more complex, the oversight, planning, and implementation structures need to adjust so that increased needs for communication and multilevel, multipartner involvement are met. A communitywide initiative often will have staff that work with practitioners such as case managers, job developers, or dropout coordinators. These staff will be supervised by a director who works closely with an interagency planning team. The chairperson of the planning team, along with the director, plans meetings with a leaders group when policy questions cannot be resolved by the planning team or when new plans must be endorsed.

Shared Decisionmaking and Interagency Ownership

A partnership cannot survive if it is not owned by a critical number of partners. Ownership will not develop if the partnership does not meet the needs of collaborators, if it does not benefit all parties, if partners do not trust one another, or if partners are not allowed to share in decisionmaking. Sometimes a governance structure is created to give the illusion of democratic decisionmaking, but in reality decisions are made by a few individuals behind closed doors. In this case, meetings become mere information-sharing sessions. Or, in another scenario, meeting decisions are unmade afterwards, usually by one highly placed leader, such as a school superintendent or Private Industry Council chair. When either of these situations

persists for long, people become angry and alienated, and organizations begin to pull out of the process.

Shared Credit and Recognition

Partnerships do not work well when one partner tries to take the credit for work done through the sponsorship and hard work of various institutions. This point is often ignored, with disastrous results. Partners slighted in this way feel manipulated and used. Consequently, they are likely to withdraw support, sabotage the effort, or pull away and start a competing program of their own. All partners need incentives for participation and should receive frequent public recognition or awards.

Appropriate, Well-timed Resources

Money is not a magic bullet which solves human resource issues, as much as we yearn to believe that this is the case. Additional resources—human, financial, in-kind—are important to partnership development, but it is more important to have a solid sense of direction and a good plan. "If you know where you are going, the money will come," is a good maxim for the partnership business.

Technical Assistance

Cities and school districts that are attempting to develop effective working partnerships will generally need technical assistance. In general, the more complex the partnership, the greater the need for technical assistance. Partnership plans should include specific assistance needs, and the budget should include funds for this purpose. Most major foundation-supported partnerships now recognize the importance of technical assistance and provide focused assistance. In addition, there are numerous multisite, at-risk youth initiatives in the country, all supporting the replication of successful programs with intensive technical assistance.

Cities need to determine local assistance needs through cooperative processes, and they need to locate appropriate resources. Consistent with the principles of good training programs, technical assistance should be ongoing and not "one-shot." Assistance should be practical in nature, not theoretical. As a result, partners should be able to work more effectively.

Technical assistance needs vary by project and by site. In general, assistance needs fall into the following categories: facilitation/negotiation/problemsolving; project management; strategic planning; evaluation; and technical professional development (i.e., new instructional approaches, case management).

Formal Agreements

Connections between agencies are complicated and often take much planning and negotiation. In the case of a city attempting to develop a case management system, service access issues

may be daunting. Agreements must be carefully crafted, then put in writing, signed, monitored, and adjusted over time by a leaders group.

Action and Frequent Success

The problem with partnerships, particularly large-scale or citywide initiatives, is that they become unwieldy. People often become more concerned with the structure than with the goals. Or, teams or coalitions may plan and plan and never figure out how to get to action. Both situations lead to the eventual failure of the partnership. Every partnership project, especially large or more abstract ventures, needs to plan and implement short-term activities and long-term goals. The short-term successes, particularly if they assist young people, are a great motivator for future action.

Patience, Vigilance, and Increased Involvement

Leaders, planners, and managers come and go, and each staff change presents challenges to the partnership. Care must be taken to fully inform and involve new people and to enlist their support, concern, and leadership. This is a very time-and-labor-intensive process, and it is tempting to try to "short sheet" the process. However, if a critical mass of leadership does not remain committed to the partnership, the effort will die.

Another critical point is that change takes time. If partnerships want to impact change in public education, it will take several years. It is not easy to make this long-term commitment, especially when funding cycles take a short-term approach to complex social issues. However, time is critical. In New Haven, Connecticut, for example, schools using James Comer's approach to school change have been working on the initiative successfully since 1968.

Expanding involvement and activity is essential. Partnerships that are not growing are very likely dying. Since many collaborative efforts start small, with a limited number of partners, doing more means involving more groups and organizations. Reaching out to community groups—notably parents, students, and racial-ethnic populations—is critical. Working collaboratively with these groups demands new ways of thinking about outreach, involvement, information gathering and dissemination, and decisionmaking.

Local Ownership

If partnerships develop in cities as a result of outside grants—from state or federal agencies, or from private foundations—the partnership will not survive the funding unless the initiative becomes locally owned. Often the first sign of this occurring is that the city renames the initiative (not using the state's terminology, for example) or the city incorporates the initiative within a larger venture which is locally developed. Another indication that the partnership is important to the city is the commitment of local matching dollars—dollars that exceed the amount of the grant.

Evaluating Partnerships

We are just beginning to grapple with the issue of how to evaluate these exciting relationships which are being set in motion in states and communities across the country. The idea has been more compelling than the outcome, at least until recently. In the last 2 years, articles and publications have begun to question the results, particularly of business/education partnerships. A frequent criticism is that business has been generous with dollars but is not truly involved with the work of education reform. Partnership activity often looks good but lacks substance. Clearly, it is important to be clear about the purposes of education partnerships and to set measurable goals which measure client impact, or partnerships will begin to lose their efficacy and widespread support.

Some attempts have been made to formally evaluate partnerships. Many evaluations include community surveys or formal interviews with partners. Many are "process oriented" and seek to measure the relationship, the planning process, or the ability of the partnership to include various constituencies. Few, however, set measurable outcomes in terms of client or system impact and seek to evaluate the partnership against those outcomes. Few design evaluations up front before activity begins.

Several initiatives are taking evaluation seriously. For example, a data-based system was developed for the Los Angeles Unified School District and funded by the ARCO Foundation. It is the first school system in the country to track the impact of partnership activities on school improvement processes. Also, the Annie E. Casey Foundation grantee cities are developing citywide management information systems to generate data on school performance measures, employment, and health information. This information will guide future planning and measure progress toward the three goal areas. In addition, the foundation has developed "progress indicators" that help cities monitor progress toward institutional change.

What should cities measure? If, as a guide, we consider the impact typology discussed earlier, measures begin to suggest themselves within each of the six levels. For example,

Special services. Outcome measures focus on clients. Outcomes should not address serving clients but the outcomes of the particular service. For example, increased job placement rates as a result of developing summer school programs; college placement rates for students in Career Beginnings programs; low repeat pregnancy rates for girls being served in school clinic-sponsored support groups.

Classroom. Outcome measures focus on such issues as students' academic performance, classroom attendance, and grade promotion. In addition, some "softer" variables such as self-esteem, feelings about school, and students/teachers respect for diversity may be evaluated.

Teacher training. Evaluations focus on whether new teaching strategies are implemented successfully in classrooms and whether new techniques improve performance, particularly the performance of disadvantaged youth. Implementation requires a peer coaching approach; evaluation requires adding these new requirements into the regular supervision process.

Management. Evaluations focus on whether new management techniques are successfully adopted by administrators and whether these methods improve staff morale and performance. Often new agreements with administrators and teachers give staff more control of the budget, hiring and firing practices, and curriculum, in return for greater accountability for student performance.

Systemic educational improvement. Outcome measures may focus on areas related to problems experienced by particular school systems (and confirmed by data). Examples of relevant outcomes include: increases in academic performance and improvements in school attendance; increases in parent involvement (particularly at the elementary and middle school levels); decreases in suspension, truancy, nonpromotion; or increases in the graduation rate. (As an example of the arbitrary nature of these levels, it is worth mentioning that decreases in suspension or nonpromotion will usually require a change in school policy.)

Policy. Outcome measures in this category should cross institutional boundaries and address common goals for the client and the system. Examples of common outcomes might be increases in job or higher education placement rates for graduates; or increases in education levels, job placements, or job retention for young parents on Aid to Families With Dependent Children. Monitoring formal agreements is an important part of policy-level evaluations. However, it is important not to lose sight of the reasons these system changes are sought: not for the sake of change alone but to make the system work better for the clients of that system.

Final Remarks

This synthesis has attempted to provide a history and context for education partnerships, showing that we have been engaged in the business of developing partnerships for a relatively brief span of time. In the 10 years or so of major activity, partnerships have grown and evolved in scope and complexity. However, we have enough history and experience to express concerns and caveats about the partnership process that are particularly relevant and critical. We now know enough to recognize that the danger of these efforts is that they can, to adapt a phrase, be all style and showmanship, signifying nothing. On the other hand, community leaders have before them a relatively new field and a continuing opportunity to make a difference in the lives of young people and in the overall quality of their communities.

Notes

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[3]*Business Means Business About Education: A Synopsis of the Business Roundtable Companies' Education Partnerships* (June 1989), 3.

[4]*America's Leaders Speak Out on Business Education Partnerships: Proceedings and Recommendations from the Compact Institute/Business Leadership Forum,* National Alliance of Business (1989).

[5]Holzman, Terry. *A Decade of Commitment: School/College Collaboration in Boston: 1975-1985,* 3.

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[7]Ibid., 14.

[8]Farrar, Eleanor and Anthony Cipollone. *The Business Community and School Reform: The Boston Compact at Five Years* (March 1988), 30-35.

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Contacts for Partnerships Information

This list contains the names of organizations and individuals who provided information about partnerships discussed in this report. Also listed is the name of the current contact person.

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James Van Vleck, Chairman of Oversight Collaborative (513) 495-3792
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William Sprague, Chairman of Oversight Collaborative (912) 234-1261
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Commonwealth Futures
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San Diego—Bertha Pendleton, superintendent (619) 293-8418

National Alliance of Business
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